

Application No: 10/528,810
Amendment A
Reply to Office Action Dated 08/07/2007

Attorney Docket No: 3926.141

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-19, and 21-22 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-2, 4, 6, 8, and 15-16 have been amended. Claims 5 and 20 have been previously cancelled. Claims 21-22 have been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Claim 4 has been amended to overcome the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-6, 9-10, and 15-19 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Yasui (EP 1094337).

The Examiner has generally referred to paragraphs 30-47 of Yasui without specifically pinpointing the exact location where each individual feature of the present invention is supposed to be disclosed.

After reviewing paragraphs 30-47 of Yasui, it appears that the purpose of Yasui is not to generate a local 3D depth image, rather to correct the 3D image already generated. As shown in Figs. 4 and 5A-5D, image C is obtained by projecting image A onto image B and the CPU 24 then calculates a difference between the images B and C with the resultant image shown in Fig. 5D (see paragraphs 31-32). The differential image concerns object data, which is output in step S127 (see paragraph 32). Applicants believe that the output of this kind of differential image has

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no special advantage in connection with a parking system. Yasui did not describe any advantage of the output of such differential image or the exact purpose of such differential image.

Also, the distance calculation as shown in Figs. 6-9 and described in paragraphs 35-47 is to calculate the distance between the vehicle and the 3D object. This has nothing to do with the distance covered by the vehicle between two recording times of the image according to the present invention.

Yasui discloses calculating a linear transit distance ΔD and comparing it with a threshold value in order to decide whether or not the image pick-up should send another analog image (see paragraph 30 and steps S122 and S123 in Fig. 4). In other words, Yasui discloses how to determine the distance D between the vehicle and the 3D-object, taking into consideration of the distance ΔD between two image recording points, corresponding to the basic distance between two cameras in a conventional stereo-camera system. The accuracy of the determination of the distance D increases with the accuracy of ΔD .

The Examiner has referred to paragraphs 35-45 of Yasui as disclosing the feature of claim 5, which has now been added to claims 1 and 15 respectively. However, it is not clear how Yasui discloses that only buffered images during whose recording the orientation of the camera has not changed significantly are selected to form image pairs. The advantage of this feature is described in paragraph [00016] of the specification of the instant application.

Claims 1 and 15 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over Yasui and all the dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they are dependent on claims 1 or 15.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7-8 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yasui in view of Ishii (US 2004/0105579 A1).

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Claims 7-8 are believed to be patentable because they are dependent on claim 1.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11-14 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

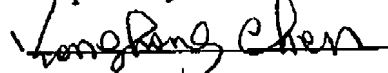
Claims 11-14 are believed to be patentable in dependent form as they are ultimately dependent on claim 1, which is believed to be patentable as discussed above.

New claims 21-22 have been added. New claim 21 recites the limitation "the predefined value is 0.3 m", which has been deleted from claim 4. New claim 22 combines all the features of previous claims 1, 6-8 and 11. Since claim 11 contains allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner, claim 22 is believed to be allowable.

Favorable consideration and early issuance of the Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. Should further issues remain prior to allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the indicated telephone number.

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Respectfully submitted,



Yonghong Chen
Registration No. 56,150
Akerman Senterfitt
Customer No. 30448
222 Lakeview Avenue, Suite 400
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
Phone: 561-653-5000
Fax: 561-659-6313

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